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AUTHOR Norton, Deborah
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ABSTRACT

This conference presentation describes the AUEN (Addressing Unique Education Needs) system of assessing educational outcomes which is used by the Rochester (Michigan) Community Schools to help establish accountable and effective special education support programs and services. The AUEN provides an innovative and practical approach to assessment, by presenting a set of performance indicators that are tied to functional adult living roles. It addresses such needs of students as communication, interpersonal relationships, emotional development, daily living skills, decision making, and personal goal orientation. The AUEN provides a broad perspective on educational needs, a long range focus, a common frame of reference, and assessment strategies for determining student progress toward achievement of outcomes. When whole groups of students perform below established expectations, schools should systematically review their structure and programs. Several supporting materials are appended to the conference presentation. These address implementing the outcomes approach, managing change, and learner characteristics. (JDD)

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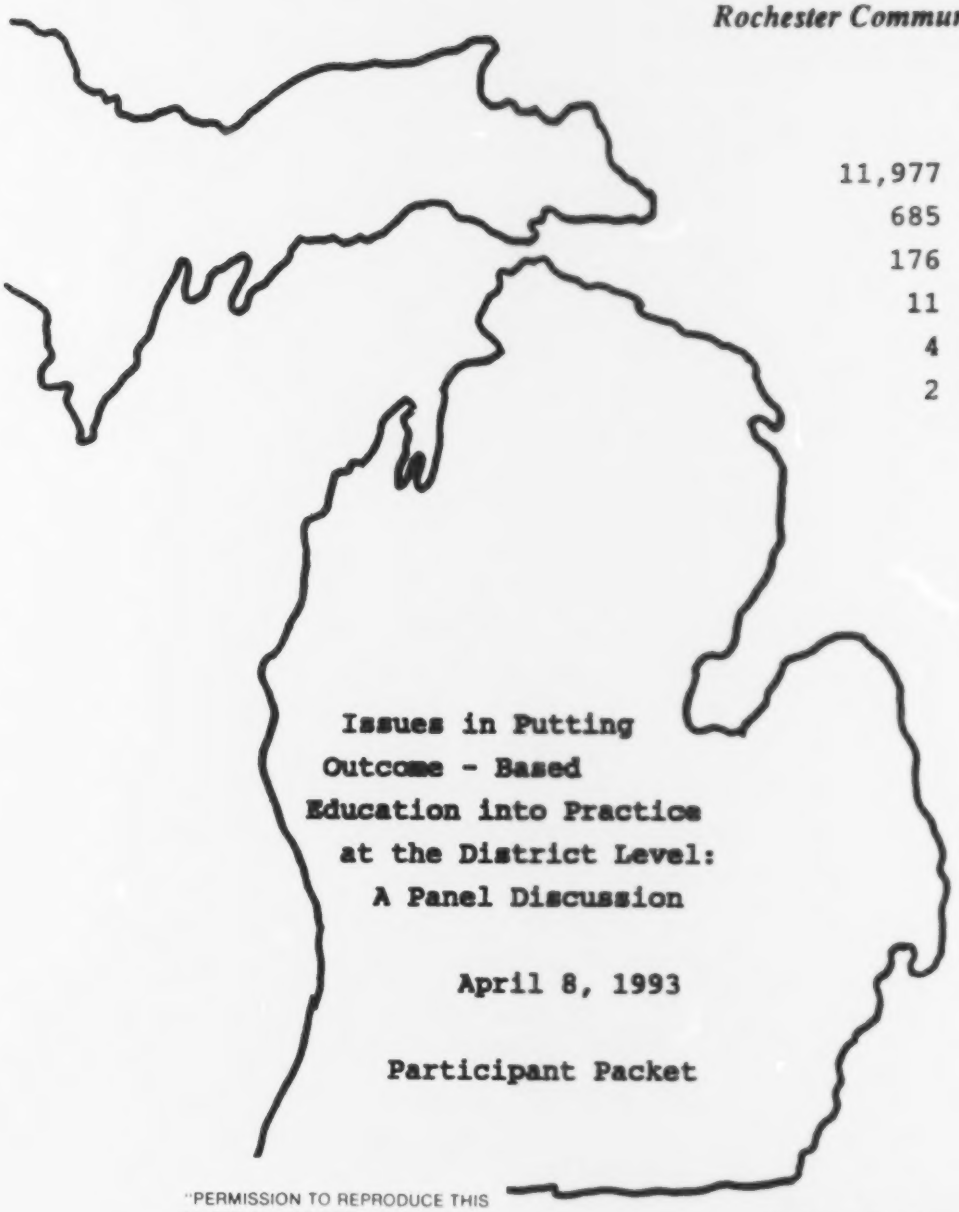
Rochester Community Schools



11,977 Students
685 Teachers
176 Paraprofess
11 Elem. Sch.
4 Middle Sch.
2 High Sch.

Issues in Putting Outcome - Based Education into Practice at the District Level: A Panel Discussion

April 8, 1993

Participant Packet

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Deborah Norton
Teacher Consultant
Rochester Community School
501 W. University
Rochester, MI 48307

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Special Education Program Outcome Guides or
Addressing Unique Educational Needs of
Individuals with Disabilities -
An Outcome Based Approach (AUEN)

What is the AUEN?

The AUEN is a system of educational outcomes and assessments organized by disability category. Its purpose is to bring greater accountability to educational programs serving students with disabilities. By collecting assessment data once every 1 to 2 years, educators can better monitor the needs of these students. Based upon the needs that are identified for individual students or groups of students, decisions can be made about the success of particular services, the need for additional services, or appropriate IEP goals and objectives.

Why did RCS select the AUEN?

Significant problems have been encountered by school systems in defining and monitoring the unique educational needs of students with disabilities. These problems have lead to confusion over the direction, goals, and purpose of special education services.

Pressure to resolve these issues continues to mount in schools as parents and others become increasingly concerned with the high dropout rates and low employment rates of individuals with disabilities as well as their disproportionate representation in jobs that pay below minimum wage, offer no fringe benefits, or have no growth or career potential. These concerns have given special educators cause to look more carefully at the effectiveness of their programs. With this interest, emphasis is now being placed on the identification and measurement of student outcomes.

Recognizing these concerns, RCS has turned to the AUEN for a system to help the district establish accountable and effective special education support programs and services. The AUEN provides an innovative and practical response to these problems by presenting a set system of performance indicators which are tied to functional adult living roles.

How is the AUEN different from what RCS has already been doing?

The AUEN provides a functional approach to accommodating the educational needs of students with disabilities. The focus of education is broadened beyond the traditional content areas to reflect functioning in adult living roles. Instead of focusing on the isolated skills of reading or math, the AUEN addresses the broader outcomes of communicating through print and solving daily living problems requiring the application of mathematical skills. It also addresses those needs of students that are often left unattended by the schools. Such needs might include interpersonal relationships, emotional development, daily living skills, strategies for approaching personal decisions, and the personal goal orientations of students.

The following features characterize the uniqueness of value of the AUEN to educators:

- The AUEN provides a **broad perspective** on the educational needs of individuals with disabilities who are served in RCS. Whereas many teachers may focus on one or more of the Outcomes, the AUEN provides a mechanism for continuous review of the "bigger picture."

- The AUEN provides a **long range focus** for all levels of elementary and secondary education. Without dictating what should be taught or how, the Outcomes contained in the AUEN give teachers at all levels a consistent context around which they can design their instructional activities.

- The AUEN provides a **common frame of reference** for communicating the focus of specific special education programs and services to the wide range of persons who need to know the purpose and goals of special education. The list of persons is long and often complex as many professionals enter and sometimes exit the educational process. Among these individuals are parents, general education teachers, specialist (such as Occupational or Physical Therapists, Orientation and Mobility specialist, social workers, school psychologist, licensed psychologists, optometrists, and many others), advocates, school administrators, and school paraprofessionals.

- The AUEN provides **assessment strategies** for determining student progress toward achievement of the Outcomes. Each assessment strategy is unique to the particular categorical area, but is always focused on skills, behaviors, or experiences that students should be expected to demonstrate or attain at particular age (grade) levels. The assessment strategies make it possible to consistently monitor student progress toward the desired Outcomes at any point along the K-12 continuum.

Is this the curriculum?

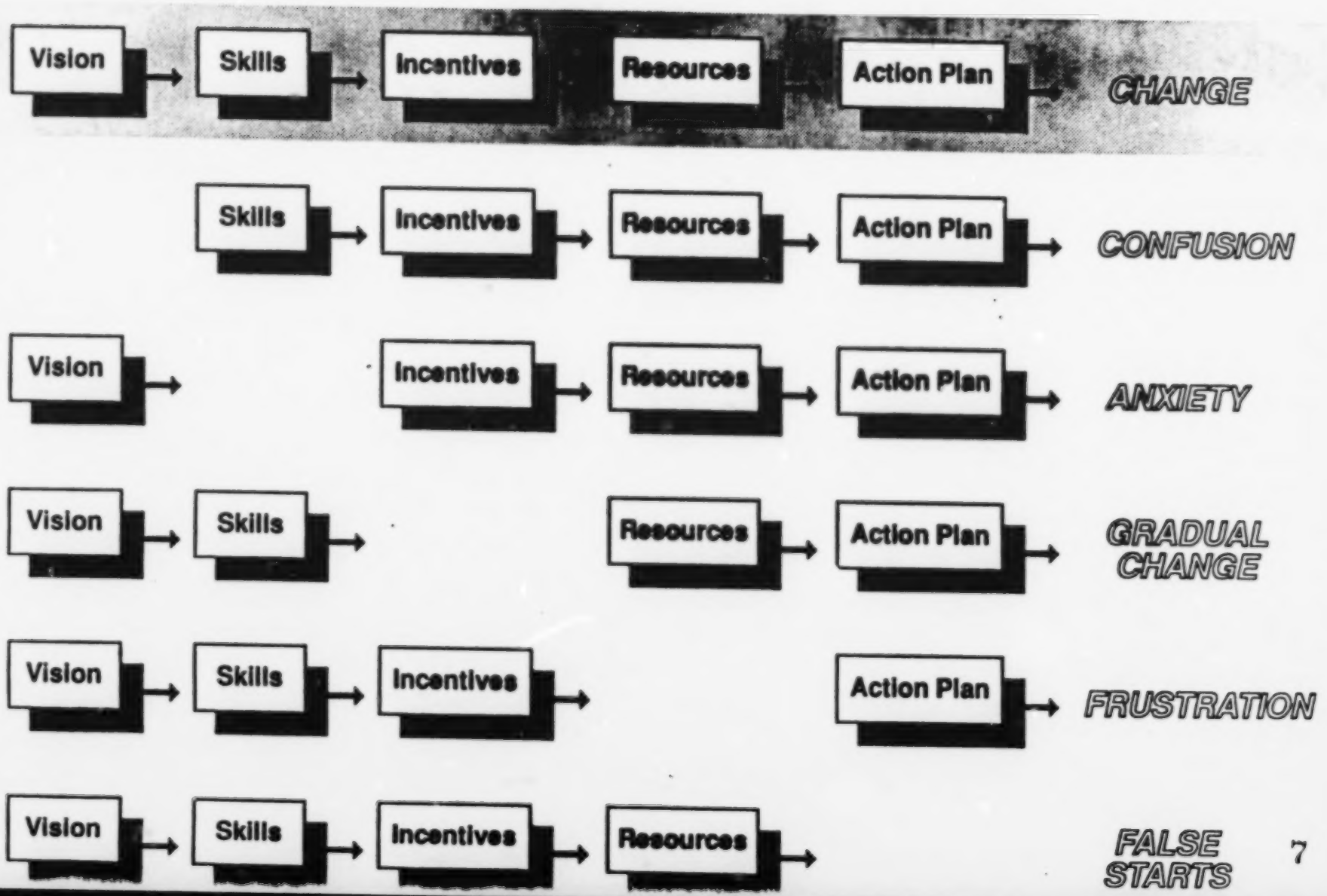
No! The AUEN contains a valuable context and focus for curriculums, but curriculums go much further to provide detailed plans for achieving educational Outcomes. There are many ways to achieve the Outcomes elaborated in the AUEN. After collecting assessment data, all programs will need to look at their current curriculum to determine if it actually reflects the global focus of the Outcomes.

What if students "fail" the Outcomes?

The Outcomes should not be confused with any type of minimum competency. The Outcomes are not part of the district testing programs, nor are the assessments a strategy for monitoring school compliance.

Passing or failing the Outcomes is not a relevant focus. The relevant focus is determining the school's effectiveness with students (both individuals and groups), given the widely varying approaches to education that districts may take. Students cannot "fail" an outcome. They perform below, at, or above expectations. When whole groups of students perform below established expectations, the schools must become introspective, systematically reviewing their structure and programs. Perhaps different efforts are needed, such as additional resources; revised curriculums; reorganization of services; or different teaching strategies; materials, and procedures. Many possibilities exist.

Managing Complex Change



HOW ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE

IMPLEMENTING THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1990 - 1993

Use 1: To **COMMUNICATE THE UNIQUE NEEDS** of students with disabilities to parents, advocates, adult service agencies, and general and special educators.

- Rochester Community Schools Staff (Classroom and Resource Teachers, Teacher Consultants, Psychologist, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Teachers of the Speech and Language Impaired) have been **trained** in one or more of the Special Education Program Outcomes Guides: Educable Mental Impairment, Emotional Impairment, Learning Disabilities, Severe Disabilities, and Speech and Language Impaired.

- This year Rochester Community Schools will be encouraging **parent** attendance at an **awareness** session. This session, sponsored by Oakland Intermediate School District, will acquaint them with the Special Education Program Outcome Guides.

- Based on the Unique Needs paper, Rochester Community School has prepared a one page **overview** of the unique learner characteristics of individuals with differing disabilities. Each listed learner characteristics also details significant implications for educational program planning.

Use 2: To **APPRAISE STUDENT PROGRESS** toward significant educational outcomes.

- Last year staff completed Assessment Checklists on all students with educable mental impairment at the elementary level. **Individual profiles** and aggregated **group profiles** provided a common frame of reference for planning, implementing and evaluating educational efforts.

- The district will require that the assessments be completed at a minimum once every three years, to correspond to the formal three year re-evaluation meeting of the **Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation Team (MET)**. Information from the assessments will be incorporated in the MET Report.

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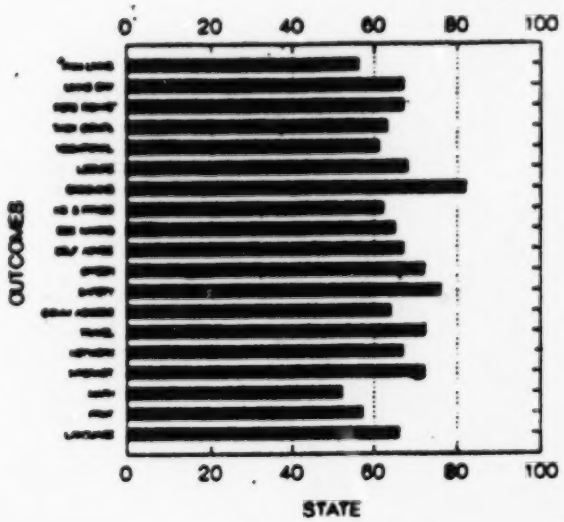
• The Expected Outcomes in conjunction with Outcome assessment data and the individual learning abilities and learning styles of students are being used to dictate instructional goals, strategies, settings and necessary staff assignments.

• This year progress of all secondary students with educable mental impairment is being measured by the Performance Checklist Assessments. The profiles will be used in **Transition IEP's**.

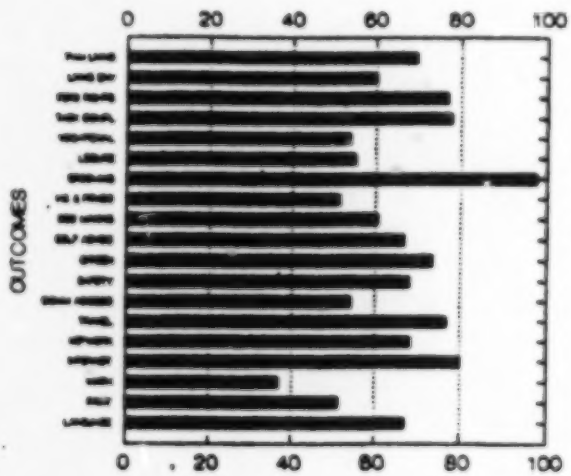
Use 3: To **EXPLORE PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS**

• Rochester's Special Education Department was selected as a pilot site by the Center for Quality Special Education to administer the **Exit Performance Assessments** that accompany the Program Outcomes Guide. The results of outcome achievement on these assessments for ten secondary students allowed the committee to develop a profile of Rochester students with Educable Mental Impairment in comparison to the statewide profile.

STATEWIDE EPA PROFILE - EMI



EMI DISTRICT PROFILE FOR ROCHESTER COM



• Based on the accumulated data from the Exit Performance Assessment, the Center for Quality Special Education assisted the Functional Curriculum Committee in developing appropriate goals leading to program improvement through the district's curriculum development process.

• As a result of these curriculum efforts Rochester Community Schools has enhanced the functional curriculum to include a **community-based instruction** component. This year the district started the **Wings Program** for our post-high school population. It is a transitional program (meaning a program leading from school to work/community) where the community serves as a basis for the curriculum and also becomes the extended classroom.

• Currently Rochester Community Schools has 9th and 10th graders, prior to receiving formal vocational training, spend 1/2 of their day, 5 days a week, at a work experience site in the **community**. High School sites this year have been:

Rochester Hills Racquet Club
Farmer Insurance Agency
Green Apple Hallmark
Rochester Library

• The **Functional Curriculum** for students with educable mental impairment has been aligned with the Expected Outcomes.

Use 4: To **INTEGRATE SUPPORT SERVICES** with the general education effort.

•Rochester Community Schools offers the full continuum of programs and services for students with disabilities. For students anywhere on the continuum: in a co-taught classroom, mainstreamed from a basic classroom or accessing an inclusion option, the need for collaboration between **general education** and special education is essential. The Expected Outcomes complement and support general education for individuals with disabilities.

• Through the use of a **Curriculum Matrix** special educators will be able to demonstrate the interface of unique goals for a student with disabilities with the regular education curriculum to both parents and general educators.

• The **IEP-At-A-Glance**, to match different disability categories, is a useful document to organize the needs and skills of students into a one-page format that can be used for quick reference.

• General Educators and special educators are using their unique expertise to coordinate efforts to **align** the Expected Outcomes with general education core curriculum movements underway in the district.

• Rochester Community Schools is developing a format for the buildings **Annual Report** to communicate the progress being made by students with disabilities toward their expected outcomes.

Compiled by:
Deborah Norton, Teacher Consultant

DN1-33/jh

Rochester Community Schools
Special Education Department

UNIQUE LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS
of Students with Educable Mental Impairment

DELAYED INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Characteristics: below average intellectual functioning; delayed intellectual functioning

Educational implications: additional time required to learn skills and concepts more directed and systematic instruction alternative approaches for learning

INEFFICIENT LEARNING STRATEGIES

Characteristics: do not spontaneously generalize strategies; poor ability to learn incidentally or profit from incomplete instruction; learning process is delayed; learning process may be different; difficulty in attending to task in initial stages; difficulty in discriminating relevant stimuli

Educational implications: need to learn to identify and attend to critical features of a learning task organize materials for learning; highlight salient information; make presentations concise; brisk and interesting; reduce distracting and irrelevant stimuli; metacognitive training

FAILURE EXPECTANCY

Characteristics: expectancy for failure results in decreased effort; reduces motivation; may become very passive; may be dependent on authority figures or peers for assistance

Educational implications: begin instruction at points where student can experience success focus attention on task cues; provide opportunities for successful independent work reinforce students for "figuring it out themselves"

SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Characteristics: difficulty in intervening effectively in social settings may be less persuasive than non-handicapped peers; social competencies may reflect a mental age rather than chronological age; difficulty recognizing and coordinating thoughts, feelings and beliefs of self and those with whom they are interacting

Educational implications: needs assistance in developing social skills; need to increase appropriate interpersonal contacts

Compiled by:
Deborah Norton, Teacher Consultant
Muriel Jones, Psychologist

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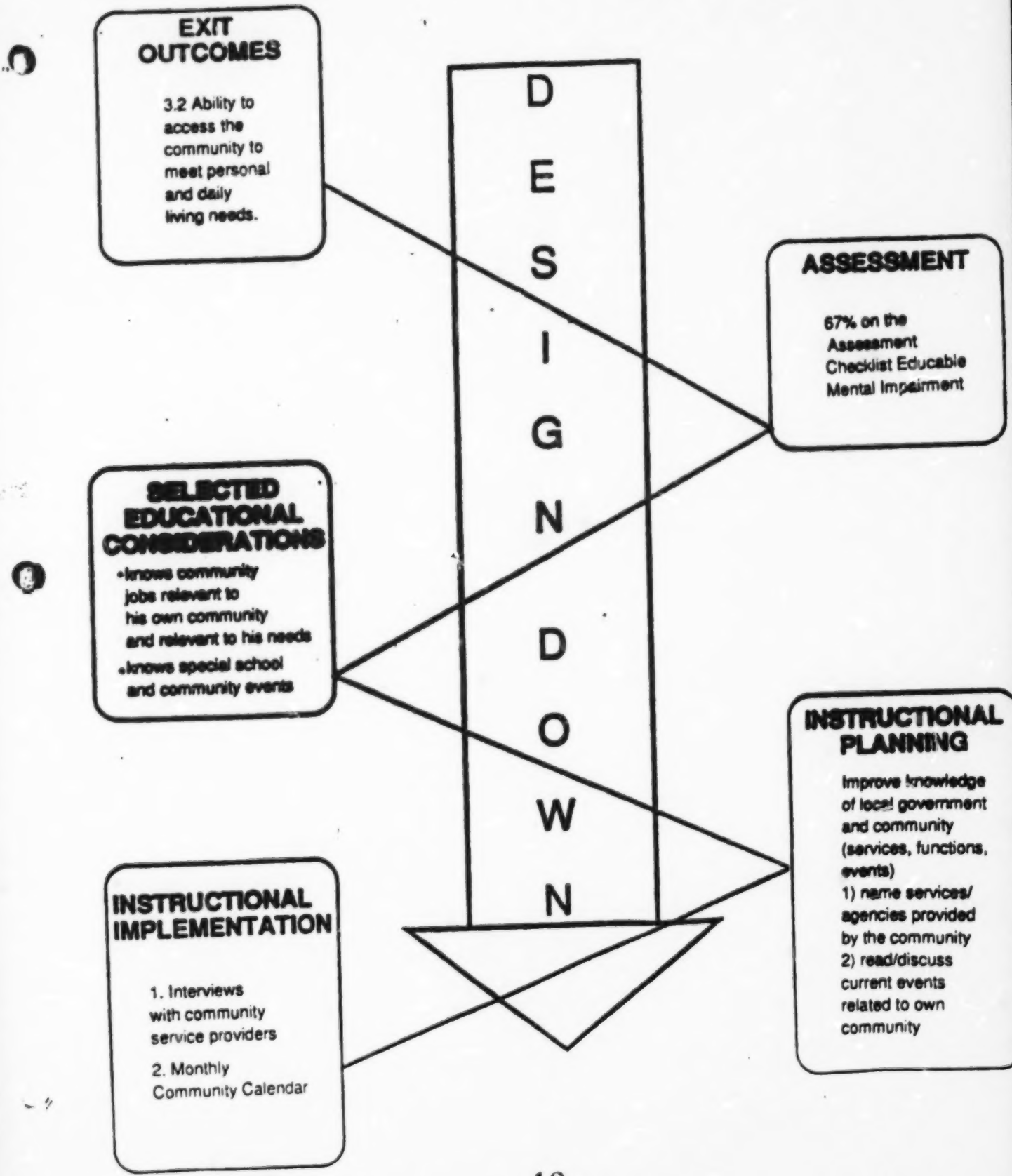
EXIT OUTCOMES
3.2 Ability to access the community to meet personal and daily living needs.
D E S I G N D O W N
ASSESSMENT
67% on the Assessment Checklist Educable Mental Impairment
SELECTED EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS
•knows community jobs relevant to his own community and relevant to his needs
•knows special school and community events
INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING
Improve knowledge of local government and community (services, functions, events)
1) name services/ agencies provided by the community
2) read/discuss current events related to own community
INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION
1. Interviews with community service providers
2. Monthly Community Calendar

CURRICULUM MATRIX

FOR

JASON

Grade 4
May, 1992

	Transportation/Entry	Attendance/Lunchcount	AM Group Meeting	Centers	Snack	Large Group Lesson	Story/Listening	Class Jobs	Language Arts	Reading Group	Spelling	Handwriting/Computer	Math	Science	Social Studies	Art	Music	P.E.	Library/Media Center	Recess	Lunch	Tribes	Celebrity Theatre	Emergencies	Health	Ind. Reading
Improve conversation skills	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Improve measurement skills		X			X								X	X		X		X								
Learn basic math skills		X		X									X	X												
Learn to solve story problems													X	X	X							X				
Learn to load and run computer				X					X		X	X	X	X	X				X							
Improve knowledge of local government															X											
Learn indoor and outdoor safety	X																	X		X	X			X	X	
Improve ability to accept responsibility/take initiative	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Learn about different careers															X								X			
Learn home maintenance repair skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue Reading Program									X																	X
Expressive Writing Skills									X	X	X			X	X										X	X

vb/FL1-85

Name: Jason
Date: May, 1992

IEP-AT-A-GLANCE

Category 1: Academics

- Improve conversation skills (topic-related comments, express feelings, eye contact, change communication style)
- Improve measurement skills (calendar, time to 5 minutes, equivalent coins)
- Learn basic math concepts (count to 200, place value, read numbers to 200)
- Learn to solve story problems, think logically and make predictions (relevant information, operation required)
- Learn to load and run a computer program (keyboard, types of uses)
- Maintain academic progress within his individualized reading program (sight vocabulary, comprehension)
- Expand expressive writing skills (3 sentence paragraph, directions)

Category 2: Social Competence

Category 3: Community Integration

- Improve knowledge of local government (services, functions, current events)
- Learn indoor and outdoor safety procedures (walking, emergency telephoning, becoming lost)

Category 4: Personal Growth and Health and Fitness

- Improve ability to accept responsibility and take initiative (plan/organize week, choices/consequences)

Category 5: Vocational Integration

- Learn about different careers (related tasks, benefits of work)

Category 6: Domestic Living Environment

- Learn home maintenance/repair skills (clean work area, responsibilities at home)